

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for protecting an entity from the effects of fire caused by an explosion comprising covering at least a part of said entity in a barrier comprising a water gel wherein the barrier comprises multiple water gel layers in which the concentration of the gel increases from outside water gel layer to the inner water gel layer.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said water gel comprises water and a gel selected from gelatin, gellan gum gels, poly(gamma-benzyl-L-glutamate) (PBLG), agar, collagen, protein gels, polysaccharide gels, keratin gels, hydrogels, ormosils, sol-gels, hydrophilic polymer gels, glycoprotein gels, carrageenans, pectins, alginates, seed gums, egg protein g and Gelacrimide gels or mixtures thereof.

4. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said gel is gelatin.

5. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein the concentration of gel in water is in the range 5 to 40 wt%.

6. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein the concentration of gel in water is in the range 5 to 15 wt%.

7.-8. (Canceled).

9.(Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said barrier comprises in addition to the water gel ~~[[layer]]layers~~, at least one layer of a metal, a polymer layer, a fabric layer, a ~~fibreglass~~fiberglass layer, a ceramic layer or dilatant layer or mixtures of such layers.

10. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in any one of claim 1 wherein said entity is a structure, organism or the physical environment.

11. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 10 wherein said structure or organism is a building, vehicle or human.

12. (Canceled).

13. (Currently Amended) A method for protecting an entity from the effects of fire comprising covering at least a part of said entity in a barrier comprising a water and gelatin, wherein the barrier comprises multiple water gelatin ~~[[layer]]~~ layers in which the concentration of the gelatin increases from the outside layer to the inner layer.

14. (Previously Presented) A fire-retardant material comprising gelatin and water, wherein the barrier comprises multiple water gelatin layers in which the concentration of the gelatin increases from the outside layer to the inner layer and wherein the concentration of gelatin is at least 3% w/w in said outside layer.

15. (Currently Amended) A fire-retardant material as claimed in claim 14, wherein said fire retardant material comprises in addition to the ~~gelatin and water~~ gelatin ~~[[layer]]~~ layers, at least one layer of a metal, a polymer layer, a fabric, a ~~fibre~~ glass ~~fiberglass~~ layer, a ceramic layer or a dilatant layer or mixtures of such layers.

16. (Currently Amended) A fire-retardant material as claimed in claim 15, ~~comprising~~ wherein said fire-retardant material comprises water gelatin and water layer layers and a cotton layer.

17. (Currently Amended) A fire-retardant material as claimed in claim 16, wherein said fire-retardant material further comprises ~~comprising~~ a metal layer.